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THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN

Based on the best-selling novel
by Paula Hawkins
and the DreamWorks film

Adapted by
Rachel Wagstaff
& Duncan Abel

SAMUEL FRENCH

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THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN, a West Yorkshire Playhouse production in association with Simon Friend, was first performed at West Yorkshire Playhouse on 12 May 2018. The performance was directed by Joe Murphy, with design by Lily Arnold, lighting by Lizzie Powell, sound and composition by Isobel Waller-Bridge, and video by Andrzej Goulding. The cast was as follows:

RACHEL WATSON.....Jill Halfpenny
ANNA WATSON.....Sarah Ovens
MEGAN HIPWELL.....Florence Hall
TOM WATSON.....Adam Best
SCOTT HIPWELL.....Theo Ogundipe
KAMAL ABDIC.....Jonas Khan
D.I. GASKILL.....Colin Tierney

THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN was then performed with this version of the script at Milton Keynes Theatre in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire on 23 January 2019. It was directed by Anthony Banks, with set and costumes by James Cotterill, lighting by Jack Knowles, composition and sound by Ben & Max Ringham, video by Andrzej Goulding, and fight choreography by Alison de Burgh. The assistant director was Ally Manson. The casting director was Ginny Schiller CDG. The cast was as follows:

RACHEL WATSON.....Samantha Womack
ANNA WATSON.....Lowenna Melrose
MEGAN HIPWELL.....Kirsty Oswald
TOM WATSON.....Adam Jackson-Smith
SCOTT HIPWELL.....Oliver Farnworth
KAMAL ABDIC.....Naeem Hayat
D.I. GASKILL.....John Dougall
ENSEMBLE.....Philippa Flynn
ENSEMBLE.....Matt Concannon
ENSEMBLE / STANDBY.....Ally Manson

CHARACTERS

RACHEL WATSON
ANNA WATSON
MEGAN HIPWELL
TOM WATSON
SCOTT HIPWELL
KAMAL ABDIC
D.I. GASKILL

Other characters should be played by members of the company.

SETTING

A suburban town in England.

TIME

Present day.

AUTHORS' NOTES

An ellipsis [...] indicates a trailing off, or a pause for thought.

A dash [-] indicates an interruption.

Sections in **bold** indicate a soliloquy or the dramatization of a memory or the recounting of action which has previously taken place.

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ACT I

Scene One

(Darkness.)

(Eerie music.)*

(We hear a distant song sung by school children.)*

SCHOOL CHILDREN.

ONE FOR SORROW TWO FOR JOY,
THREE FOR A GIRL FOUR FOR A BOY,
FIVE FOR SILVER SIX FOR GOLD,
SEVEN FOR A SECRET, NEVER TO BE TOLD.
MAGPIE, MAGPIE WHY DO YOU SIGH,
I SIT SO ALONE WHILE THE WORLD GOES BY.

(Lights and sounds of a train hurtling by.)

(The sound of a bottle smashing. Immediately, lights up on Rachel's bedsit.)

(The bedsit is a mess of empty takeaway boxes, G&T cans, wine bottles. Unwashed glasses, dinner plates with half-eaten food. A

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Waitrose bag. Unwashed clothes.)

*(***RACHEL** *is lying on the floor. She wakes at the sound of the bottle smashing.)*

(She touches a cut on her head. Confused. Unsettled.)

(Her mobile phone rings. She ignores it.)

(The intercom buzzer sound.)

(She presses the button.)

GASKILL. *(Though the intercom.)* I'm Detective Gaskill. Ashbury Police.

*(***RACHEL***, confused, hesitates, then presses the button, to buzz him in.)*

(She quickly tries to straighten herself up.)

(Takes a swig from one of the wine bottles.)

(Opens the door.)

GASKILL. *(Showing her his badge.)* Detective Gaskill. May I...?

(She allows him in.)

RACHEL. I'm sorry, I'm a bit of a - *(Corrects herself.) it's* a bit of a mess.

*(***RACHEL** *begins a quick tidy-up.)*

GASKILL. Been having a party?

RACHEL. No. I mean, yes. But they've gone. My friends, they've all...

(Realising.) They've all gone.

I was just clearing up.

GASKILL. You're Rachel Watson?

RACHEL. What have I done?

GASKILL. It's a missing person. She lives on your old road. Blenheim Road.

RACHEL. How do you know where I used to live?

GASKILL. Your husband – sorry, ex-husband's new wife gave me your address.

RACHEL. Anna?

GASKILL. You know her?

RACHEL. No.

GASKILL. Oh. She said you call the house quite a lot.

RACHEL. I know who she is. I just don't know her.

(Beat.)

RACHEL. Who's the missing person?

GASKILL. Her name's Megan Hipwell. Do you know her?

RACHEL. I don't think so, no.

GASKILL. She used to run the art gallery, on Roseberry Avenue.

*(***GASKILL** *shows her a picture on his phone.)*

RACHEL. I'm sorry. I've never -

*(***RACHEL** *takes the phone. As she looks at it.)*

(Lights change.)

(The scream of a train hurtling past.)

*(***MEGAN** *appears.)*

*(***RACHEL** *looks at her. A shocked look of recognition on* **RACHEL***'s face.)*

*(***MEGAN** *disappears.)*

(Lights back to normal.)

RACHEL. I'm sorry, I don't know a Megan.

(Hands back the phone.)

GASKILL. Are you sure? She lives two doors down from your ex-husband.

RACHEL. She must have moved there after I left. I didn't know her – Don't know her. I'm not saying she's…

GASKILL. I'm speaking to people who were in the vicinity when she disappeared. Where were you Saturday night?

RACHEL. Here.

GASKILL. The big party…

(They both smile.)

GASKILL. So, you weren't at Blenheim Road.

RACHEL. No.

GASKILL. *(Writes in his notepad.)* The only thing is, the new Mrs Watson, she said you were there Saturday night.

RACHEL. But, but I wasn't. She must be…

GASKILL. …?

RACHEL. Lying. She must be lying.

GASKILL. Why would she -

RACHEL. She -

GASKILL. She was certain you'd come to her house Saturday night.

RACHEL. *(Still confused.)* That doesn't make any sense. Saturday, I -

What did Anna say about me?

*(***ANNA** *appears, holding her baby. The conversation* **ANNA** *had with* **GASKILL** *is replayed.)*

ANNA. She's completely obsessed with us. She phones and hangs up. She turns up unannounced. She even took our baby once. Did you know that?

*(***ANNA** *caresses* **BABY EVIE**. *Holds her close.)*

GASKILL. What did this Rachel want Saturday night?

ANNA. To see Tom. Again. I told her he was at the gym.

She'd been drinking. Tears, make-up all over her face. Evie was frightened. Rachel was threatening me.

I've tried so hard to be understanding, but there has to be a limit...

GASKILL. Did she try to hurt you?

ANNA. I don't know what she's capable of. I don't even think she does.

GASKILL. But did she try to hurt you?

ANNA. No. But...she called, later. Left some rambling message for Tom.

*(***ANNA** *disappears.)*

*(***GASKILL** *turns back to* **RACHEL**.*)*

GASKILL. So, which one of you is lying?

RACHEL. That's not true. I was here. I had a couple of drinks, and then I -

(The penny drops.)

Oh...

GASKILL. Rachel?

RACHEL. No. She's right.

I'd had a few drinks. I wasn't planning to... I just wanted to see him. My husband.

GASKILL. Ex-husband.

RACHEL. But I didn't threaten her. I went home. Bought some more drink and had a...

(She looks at all the mess.)

GASKILL. Party?

RACHEL. ...Yes.

GASKILL. For one.

RACHEL. But I didn't call them later. Didn't leave a message.

(Beat.)

RACHEL. Did I?

*(***GASKILL** *holds out his phone, presses a button. We hear the message played.* **RACHEL** *drunk and teary.)*

RACHEL. *(On the voicemail.)* **Tom. I'm really sorry about coming round tonight. I just wanted to see you. I didn't mean to cause a scene. I don't know why Anna has to be such a – sorry. I'm sorry.**

(Beeps.)

(Silence.)

RACHEL. I didn't mean to lie. I promise.

I get these...sort of, black holes in my memory. I wake up the next day and people have to tell me what happened...what I did.

GASKILL. A medical condition? Or..?

(They both look at all the booze.)

RACHEL. So, I drink. Sometimes people need something just to…

Okay, I was there. But I didn't see Jess.

GASKILL. Jess?

RACHEL. Megan. Sorry. I didn't see Megan.

GASKILL. What happened here?

*(***GASKILL** *goes to touch a cut on* **RACHEL***'s head.)*

(A flash of light. The sound of a glass bottle smashing. **RACHEL** *feels a blow to her head.)*

(Back to present day.)

GASKILL. Rachel?

RACHEL. I remember something.

I was in the underpass, near Blenheim Road.

I felt a…

GASKILL. Someone attacked you?

RACHEL. I had blood on my head. My hands.

GASKILL. Did you attack anyone?

RACHEL. Why would I do that?

GASKILL. …Was the blood on your hands from your head, or…?

RACHEL. I don't know. It must have been. I don't remember anything else.

GASKILL. The black holes in your memory.

RACHEL. I'm sorry. Am I a suspect?

GASKILL. For all I know, she might have run away with

the circus. I just need to know if you saw anything that might help us.

*(**RACHEL** has nothing left to say.)*

GASKILL. Come on. Let me help you clear some of this up.

*(**GASKILL** and **RACHEL** begin loading a bag with the rubbish. **GASKILL** picks up a letter. **RACHEL** goes to stop him, but it's too late.)*

GASKILL. Eviction notice. Two weeks…

RACHEL. I'm sorting it out. Just a misunderstanding.

(He hands it back to her.)

GASKILL. I don't think I've found you at a very good time, have I?

RACHEL. I'm fine.

(Beat.)

GASKILL. If you remember anything more about Saturday night.

*(**GASKILL** holds out his card. **RACHEL** takes it but **GASKILL** doesn't let it go.)*

GASKILL. Why did you take Anna Watson's baby, that time?

RACHEL. It wasn't like that…

(Beat.)

GASKILL. *(Hands her the card. Takes the bag of rubbish.)* Here, I'll take this out for you.

*(**RACHEL** pours vodka into a modern water bottle. Straightens herself up as best she can.)*

*(**RACHEL** takes the train.)*

Scene Two

*(**TOM** with his gym bag and car keys. Post-workout. Outside the gym.)*

RACHEL. What's Anna been telling the police?

TOM. What are you doing here?

RACHEL. The detective, he said -

Is that a fake tan?

TOM. *(Embarrassed.)* No.

RACHEL. It is! Why are you fake tanning?!

TOM. Rachel. Why have you come here?

RACHEL. Because if I go to your house, your wife -

TOM. No. I mean, what do you want?

RACHEL. That detective, he thinks I threatened Anna [Saturday night].

TOM. You did threaten Anna.

RACHEL. I just came round to see you. She was the one who -

Oh, God. She was fake-tanned as well. Do you do it together?

TOM. Look, he wanted to know if we'd seen anyone the night Megan Hipwell disappeared. Not to have mentioned you would have looked like there was something to hide. I've got to get going.

RACHEL. Do you know the woman? Megan?

TOM. Yeah. She used to look after Evie sometimes.

RACHEL. Can't Anna cope with her own baby?

TOM. That's not fair.

(Turns to go.)

RACHEL. Please. I need -

TOM. What? You need money again?

RACHEL. No -

TOM. Rach, I told you, I want to help you. But I can't keep giving you money. If Anna found out -

RACHEL. It's not about money.

TOM. You mentioned your landlord.

RACHEL. When?

TOM. One of your rambling messages. Saturday night. You were...

I thought you were going to stop drinking.

RACHEL. I'm sorry about the message.

TOM. You're always sorry.

(They smile at each other.)

RACHEL. I just want to know what happened.

TOM. I only know what Anna told me. You turned up at our house in a bit of a state. She said you threatened her.

RACHEL. That's not true.

TOM. Why would she lie?

RACHEL. She's trying to turn you against me.

TOM. She's frightened of you, Rach. She's actually scared of what you'll do next.

RACHEL. Because of that time with Evie?

I'd never hurt her, your baby. I'd never -

TOM. Wouldn't you?

RACHEL. No. You know that. You know me.

TOM. You once swung for me with a golf club.

RACHEL. I was drunk. I didn't know what I was doing.

TOM. That's what scares her. That's what scares me.

(Beat.)

RACHEL. So, Saturday, I argued with Anna, and then went home… Nothing else?

TOM. As far as I know. You'd gone when I came downstairs.

RACHEL. So, you weren't at the gym. And you didn't try to -

TOM. I didn't want any trouble.

RACHEL. So you got Anna to lie for you?

TOM. It wasn't like that.

(Beat.)

RACHEL. Did I come back?

TOM. We didn't see you for the rest of the night.

RACHEL. I just keep getting the feeling I saw something. Or…

TOM. Where did you go once you left ours?

RACHEL. The off-licence. I ended up with this -

TOM. Did someone hurt you?

*(**TOM** looks at the cut on her head. Touches it, tenderly.)*

TOM. Who was it?

RACHEL. I don't know.

TOM. You see, this was always the trouble.

RACHEL. What?

TOM. It was the same when we were married. You'd get

drunk, and wake up with no memory of…

You were so different when you were sober.

RACHEL. I only began to drink when, when you and I…

TOM. Don't do this to yourself, Rach. You can't live in some fantasy of the past.

RACHEL. But that's the thing with divorce. If someone dies, there's an ending. They're buried, there's a buffet, and then they're gone.

I still have the loss, but with the knowing you're still out there. With the woman you were sleeping with when you meant to be married to me.

TOM. I can't keep apologising.

(Puts his hand on her arm.) You deserve to be happy. If you just stopped drinking -

RACHEL. What do you care?

*(***TOM** *tries to leave.)*

RACHEL. That detective…

TOM. Don't worry about him. He was asking me questions, and Anna as well.

RACHEL. He doesn't believe me.

TOM. I believe you. Just tell him what you remember and let the police deal with it.

RACHEL. I wish I could remember.

*(***TOM** *puts a sympathetic hand on* **RACHEL***'s shoulder.)*

TOM. Rach… Please don't tell Anna that we've spoken like this.

*(***TOM** *exits.)*

*(***RACHEL** *drinks from her 'water bottle.')*

RACHEL. I wish I could remember...

(Lights change. Atmospheric.)

(The sound of a train. **RACHEL** *steps forward.)*

RACHEL. Because it's you, isn't it?

*(***MEGAN** *appears, as if on her terrace. Wine in hand. Perfect.)*

RACHEL. You're the woman I watch from my train.

There are times when I think you're looking back at me.

As if you're looking for something, too. Something lost.

*(***SCOTT** *appears and goes to* **MEGAN**. *A bottle of wine. The perfect couple.)*

And he holds you. Sometimes I think he's holding you so tightly, you'll break.

I call you Jess. He's Jason and you're Jess.

You have everything I lost. You're everything I should have been.

*(***RACHEL** *suddenly remembers something.)*

Except...

(The sound a train hurtling past.)

*(***SCOTT** *disappears.* **KAMAL** *appears. Takes* **SCOTT***'s place.)*

The last time I saw you...

You were -

But I wouldn't have hurt you.

I wouldn't...

(Back to the present.)

*(***RACHEL** *takes the train to:)*